



Massachusetts English Proficiency Assessment (MEPA) Statewide Results: Spring 2009

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Executive Summary

The spring 2009 administration of the Massachusetts English Proficiency Assessment (MEPA) was the first administration of redesigned MEPA tests and the sixth year of the MEPA program, which is part of the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS). The MEPA tests were redesigned to more accurately measure the level of English proficiency of limited English proficient (LEP) students and to be more useful to educators in making reclassification decisions for students. Consequently, this report does not provide comparisons of the 2009 results with those from 2008 and prior years.

Title III of the federal No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act requires that states report annually on the performance of LEP students in the domains of reading, writing, listening, and speaking, and their progress toward achieving English proficiency. In addition, Chapter 386 of the Massachusetts Acts of 2002 (known as *Question 2*) requires English language learners in Massachusetts to participate in assessments of English language proficiency. The MEPA program is administered in order to comply with these federal and state assessment requirements, and to:

- help determine the level of English proficiency of LEP students;
- measure student, school, and district performance on the state's learning standards as detailed in the *English Language Proficiency Benchmarks and Outcomes for English Language Learners*;
- improve student achievement and classroom instruction by providing diagnostic feedback with respect to the acquisition of knowledge and skills.¹

A MEPA composite score is based on two separate assessments. The MEPA-Reading/Writing test (MEPA-R/W) assesses reading and writing knowledge and skills. The Massachusetts English Language Assessment-Oral (MELA-O), an observational assessment, assesses listening and speaking skills in English. In spring 2009, all Massachusetts LEP students in grades K–12 whose education is publicly funded were required to participate in the MEPA tests. Additional information about the MEPA program and changes made to the tests in 2009 is provided in the Background section of this report.

Major Findings

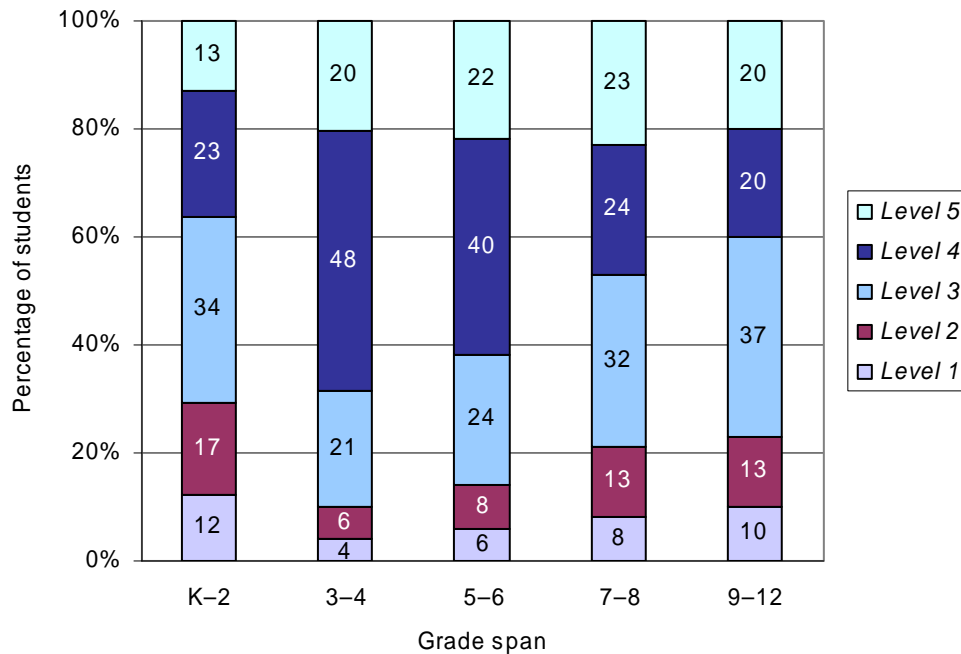
Because of the redesign of the MEPA tests, comparisons of the 2009 results with those of prior years are not possible. The spring 2009 MEPA results establish baseline data for the redesigned tests that will be used to measure progress in subsequent years.

- In March 2009, 55,163 limited English proficient students in grades K–12 participated in the MEPA tests, a participation rate of 95 percent.
- The percentage of students who performed at *Level 5*, the highest performance level, on the spring 2009 MEPA tests was relatively similar across grade spans 3–4, 5–6, 7–8, and 9–12,

¹ The Department cannot report on the progress made by students from 2008 to 2009 because of the redesign of the MEPA tests.

ranging from 20 to 23 percent, but was substantially lower at grade span K–2. The percentage of participating students who attained *Level 5* was 13 percent at grade span K–2, 20 percent at grade span 3–4, 22 percent at grade span 5–6, 23 percent at grade span 7–8, and 20 percent at grade span 9–12. See Figure 1 below.

Figure 1: Spring 2009 MEPA Performance Level Results



- Performance of LEP students on the spring 2009 MEPA tests varied by the number of years students had been enrolled in Massachusetts schools. The percentage of students who performed at *Levels 1* and *2* generally declined the longer students had been enrolled, and the percentage at *Levels 4* and *5* tended to increase the longer students were enrolled. See Figures 2–6 on pages 7–11.

I. Background

The spring 2009 MEPA program was based on two separate assessments, a reading and writing test (MEPA R-W) and a speaking and listening test (MELA-O).

The MEPA-R/W assessed reading and writing knowledge and skills. All LEP students in grades K–12 were required to participate in the MEPA-R/W, which was developed for LEP students in five grade spans: K–2, 3–4, 5–6, 7–8, and 9–12. In grades 3–12, the separate reading and writing tests consisted of three test sessions, each of increasing language complexity. Each student participated in two sessions of both reading and writing.

In making decisions about which two sessions each student would take, schools were instructed to consider results of locator tests (developed by the Department and locally administered) to evaluate which two test sessions best matched the student’s level of language proficiency. In grades K–2, students were administered either Level A or Level B tests in reading and writing according to their level of English language proficiency, informed by the use of a locator survey. The locator tests and locator survey are available at <http://www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/mepa/testadmin/>.

The MELA-O, an observational assessment, assessed listening (comprehension) and speaking (production) skills in English. All LEP students in grades K–12 were required to participate in the MELA-O. Classroom teachers who had been qualified by the Department as test administrators assessed LEP students’ listening and speaking skills by observing the students as they participated in everyday classroom activities. Using the MELA-O Scoring Matrix, a holistic scoring guide, MELA-O test administrators rated each LEP student’s listening and speaking skills.

All MEPA-R/W test items and MELA-O observable listening and speaking skills are aligned with the standards identified in *English Language Proficiency Benchmarks and Outcomes for English Language Learners*, available at <http://www.doe.mass.edu/ell/benchmark.pdf>. The two assessments together measure the range of performance identified by the five MEPA performance levels: *Level 1*, *Level 2*, *Level 3*, *Level 4*, and *Level 5*.

The MEPA tests are administered twice during the school year, once in the fall as a baseline assessment for newly enrolled LEP students in grades 1–12 (or enrolled students who did not participate in MEPA the previous spring); and again in the spring for *all* LEP students enrolled in grades K–12 (or as a baseline for new LEP students arriving *after* the fall administration).

Redesigned MEPA

For the spring 2009 administration of MEPA, the tests were redesigned in order to more accurately measure the level of English proficiency of LEP students, particularly at the very low and high ends of the performance continuum, and to be more useful to educators in making reclassification decisions for students. As part of the redesign, new MEPA R/W tests for grade span K–2 were developed to assess reading and writing proficiency of students in these grades for the first time.

The important new elements of the redesigned MEPA directly related to this report are the new reporting scale and new performance level descriptors. The new reporting scale and performance levels represent important advancements over previous years. The new reporting scale of 400–550 replaces the former reporting scale of 300–400. The 150-point scaled score range allows for reporting the full range of item difficulty and for reporting five performance levels instead of four.

The new MEPA performance levels of *Level 1*, *Level 2*, *Level 3*, *Level 4*, and *Level 5* replace the former performance levels of *Beginning*, *Early Intermediate*, *Intermediate*, and *Transitioning*. A standard-setting activity was conducted following the administration of the spring 2009 MEPA tests to set cut scores based on these new performance levels. The scaled score ranges are provided in Appendix A. New MEPA performance level descriptors are provided in Appendix B.

II. Summary of the Spring 2009 Statewide MEPA Results

Student Participation

Participation data for the spring 2009 MEPA tests summarized below are based on the Department's Student Information Management System (SIMS) enrollment data for students in grades K–12 who participated in all four MEPA assessment domains: reading, writing, listening, and speaking. Table 1 provides the number and percentage of enrolled LEP students statewide who participated in the spring 2009 MEPA tests by grade span and years of enrollment in Massachusetts.²

In spring 2009, 55,163 of the 58,367 LEP students participated in the MEPA tests, an overall participation rate of 95 percent.

Table 1: Number and Percentage of LEP Students Participating in Spring 2009 MEPA by Grade Span and Years of Enrollment in Massachusetts

Years of Enrollment	Grades K–2		Grades 3–4		Grades 5–6		Grades 7–8		Grades 9–12		Total	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
First Year	8,212	96	1,200	95	1,059	97	1,128	96	2,125	95	13,724	96
Second Year	6,922	97	987	96	908	97	926	96	1,965	95	11,708	97
Third Year	5,266	97	982	96	768	96	714	94	1,566	95	9,296	96
Fourth Year	710	95	4,179	97	596	95	666	95	1,202	93	7,353	96
Fifth Year or More	9	100	3,697	95	3,945	94	2,454	91	2,678	78	12,783	90
All Students^a	21,202	96	11,072	96	7,313	95	5,921	93	9,655	90	55,163	95

^a Numbers do not sum to number for All Students because the number of years of enrollment was not available for some students (less than one percent).

Grade spans K–2 and 3–4 had the highest participation rate at 96 percent, and grade span 9–12 had the lowest at 90 percent. At grade spans K–2, 3–4, and 5–6, participation rates were relatively stable across the number of years students had been enrolled in Massachusetts schools. However, at grade spans 7–8 and 9–12, participation significantly dropped for students who had been enrolled in Massachusetts schools for five years or more.

² Beginning in 2007, the definition of a “student in the first year of enrollment” was revised from “enrolled in a U.S. school for less than a year” to “enrolled in a Massachusetts school after March 1 of the previous school year,” as reported by districts in SIMS.

Student Performance by Years Enrolled in Massachusetts Schools

Spring 2009 MEPA results for each grade span are shown below in Table 2, disaggregated by years of enrollment.

Table 2: Performance of LEP Students in Spring 2009 MEPA by Grade Span and Years of Enrollment in Massachusetts							
Grade Span / Years of Enrollment	Number Tested	Average Scaled Score	Percentage of Students at Each Performance Level				
			Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
Grades K–2							
First Year	8,212	463	28	33	31	7	1
Second Year	6,922	481	3	12	45	29	11
Third Year	5,266	493	1	3	24	39	33
Fourth Year	710	490	1	2	31	45	21
Fifth Year or More	9 ^a	—	—	—	—	—	—
All Students ^b	21,202	477	12	17	34	23	13
Grades 3–4							
First Year	1,200	450	32	22	21	21	4
Second Year	987	473	5	15	30	37	13
Third Year	982	481	1	7	26	51	15
Fourth Year	4,179	486	0	3	21	55	20
Fifth Year or More	3,697	489	0	2	17	52	28
All Students ^b	11,072	481	4	6	21	48	20
Grades 5–6							
First Year	1,059	453	31	25	23	15	6
Second Year	908	475	5	16	33	30	15
Third Year	768	482	2	9	35	33	21
Fourth Year	596	488	1	5	24	44	26
Fifth Year or More	3,945	491	0	2	21	49	28
All Students ^b	7,313	482	6	8	24	40	22
Grades 7–8							
First Year	1,128	459	32	25	23	11	8
Second Year	926	477	6	21	38	19	16
Third Year	714	486	2	13	36	22	27
Fourth Year	666	489	2	9	35	24	30
Fifth Year or More	2,454	491	1	5	31	32	30
All Students ^b	5,921	481	8	13	32	24	23
Grades 9–12							
First Year	2,125	468	25	21	30	12	11
Second Year	1,965	480	8	17	40	16	19
Third Year	1,566	484	5	12	39	23	21
Fourth Year	1,202	486	4	9	41	23	24
Fifth Year or More	2,678	489	3	5	39	26	27
All Students ^b	9,655	481	10	13	37	20	20

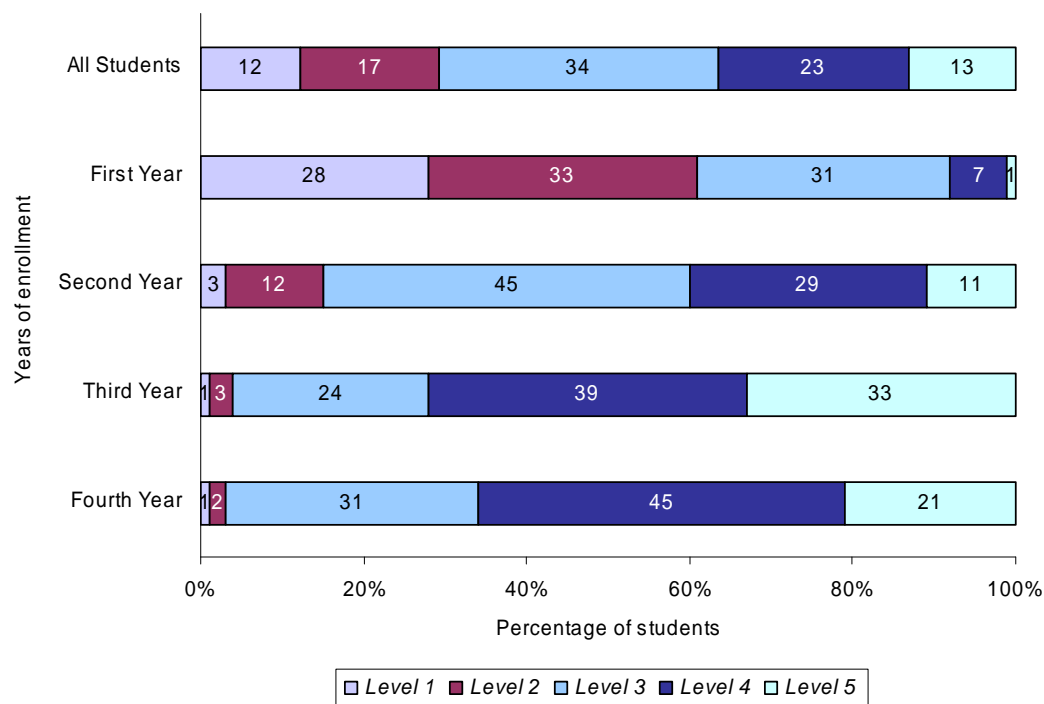
^a Results are not reported if fewer than 10 students were tested.

^b Numbers may not sum to number for All Students because the number of years of enrollment was not available for some students.

Grade Span K–2

At grade span K–2, 13 percent of all LEP students who participated in the spring 2009 MEPA tests performed at *Level 5*. The percentage of LEP students in grades K–2 performing at *Level 5* increased from 1 percent of students who were in their first year of enrollment in Massachusetts schools to 11 percent of students in their second year of enrollment and to 33 percent for those in their third year of enrollment, and declined to 21 percent of students in their fourth year of enrollment. **Grade span K–2 is the only grade span which showed a decrease in performance at *Level 5* between students in their third and fourth years of enrollment.** Twelve percent of all LEP students in grade span K–2 performed at *Level 1*, 17 percent performed at *Level 2*, 34 percent performed at *Level 3*, and 23 percent performed at *Level 4*.

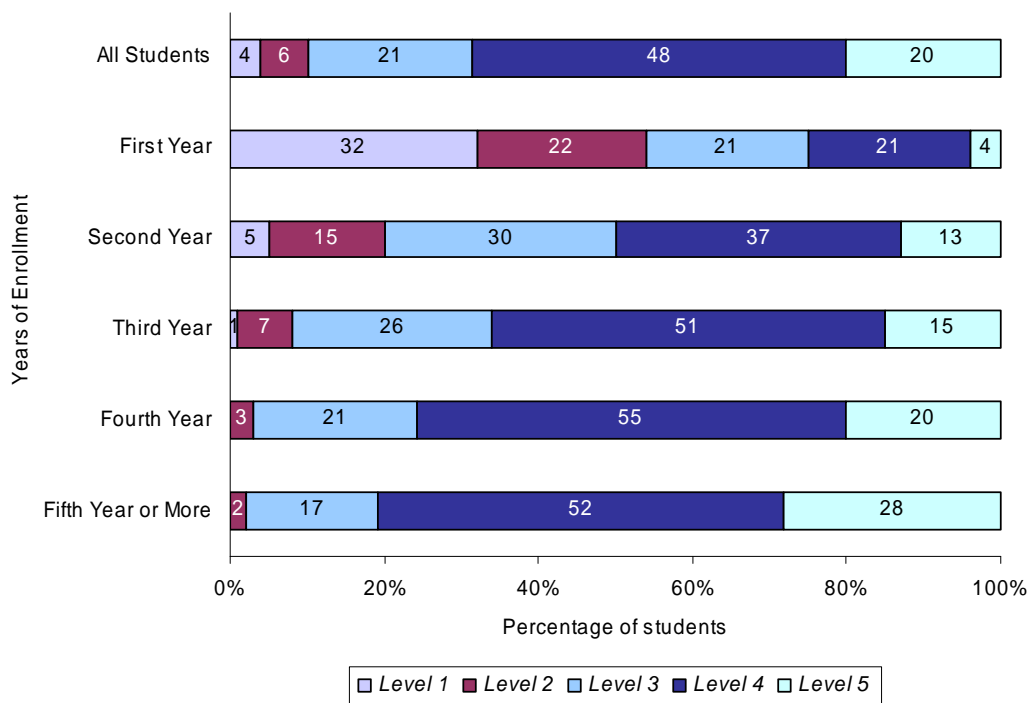
Figure 2: Spring 2009 MEPA Results—Percentage of Students at Each Performance Level by Years of Enrollment in Massachusetts: Grade Span K–2



Grade Span 3–4

At grade span 3–4, 20 percent of all LEP students performed at *Level 5*. The percentage of LEP students in grades 3–4 performing at *Level 5* increased from 4 percent of students in their first year of enrollment in Massachusetts schools, to 13 percent of students in their second year of enrollment, to 15 percent for those in their third year of enrollment, to 20 percent of students in their fourth year of enrollment, and to 28 percent of students in their fifth year of enrollment. Four percent of all LEP students in grade span 3–4 performed at *Level 1*, 6 percent performed at *Level 2*, 21 percent performed at *Level 3*, and 48 percent performed at *Level 4*.

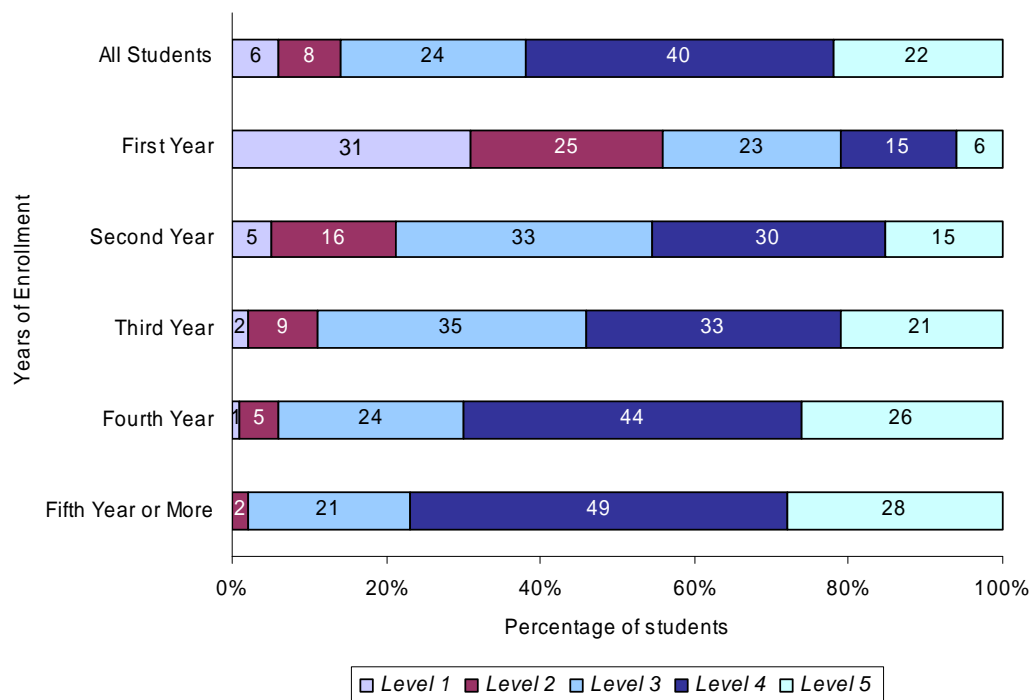
Figure 3: Spring 2009 MEPA Results—Percentage of Students at Each Performance Level by Years of Enrollment in Massachusetts: Grade Span 3–4



Grade Span 5–6

At grade span 5–6, 22 percent of all LEP students performed at *Level 5*. The percentage of LEP students in grades 5–6 performing at *Level 5* increased from 6 percent of students in their first year of enrollment in Massachusetts schools, to 15 percent of students in their second year of enrollment, to 21 percent for those in their third year of enrollment, to 26 percent of students in their fourth year of enrollment, and to 28 percent of students in their fifth year of enrollment. Six percent of all LEP students in grade span 5–6 performed at *Level 1*, 8 percent performed at *Level 2*, 24 percent performed at *Level 3*, and 40 percent performed at *Level 4*.

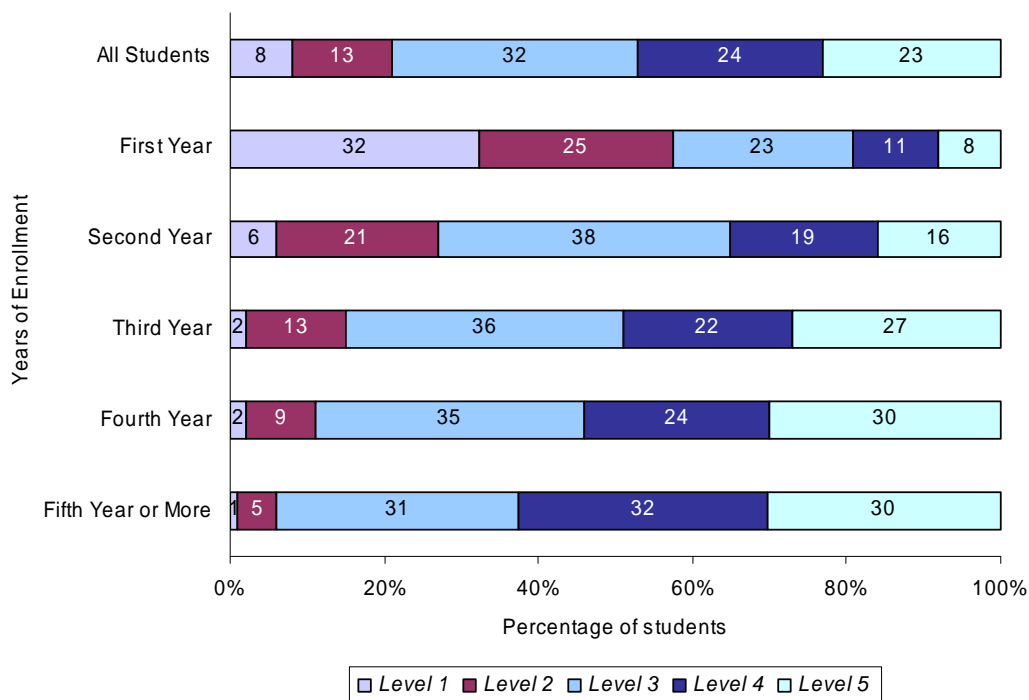
Figure 4: Spring 2009 MEPA Results—Percentage of Students at Each Performance Level by Years of Enrollment in Massachusetts: Grade Span 5–6



Grade Span 7–8

At grade span 7–8, 23 percent of all LEP students performed at *Level 5*. The percentage of LEP students in grades 7–8 performing at *Level 5* increased from 8 percent of students in their first year of enrollment in Massachusetts schools, to 16 percent of students in their second year of enrollment, to 27 percent for those in their third year of enrollment, to 30 percent of students in their fourth year of enrollment, and remained at 30 percent of students in their fifth year of enrollment. Eight percent of all LEP students in grade span 7–8 performed at *Level 1*, 13 percent performed at *Level 2*, 32 percent performed at *Level 3*, and 24 percent performed at *Level 4*.

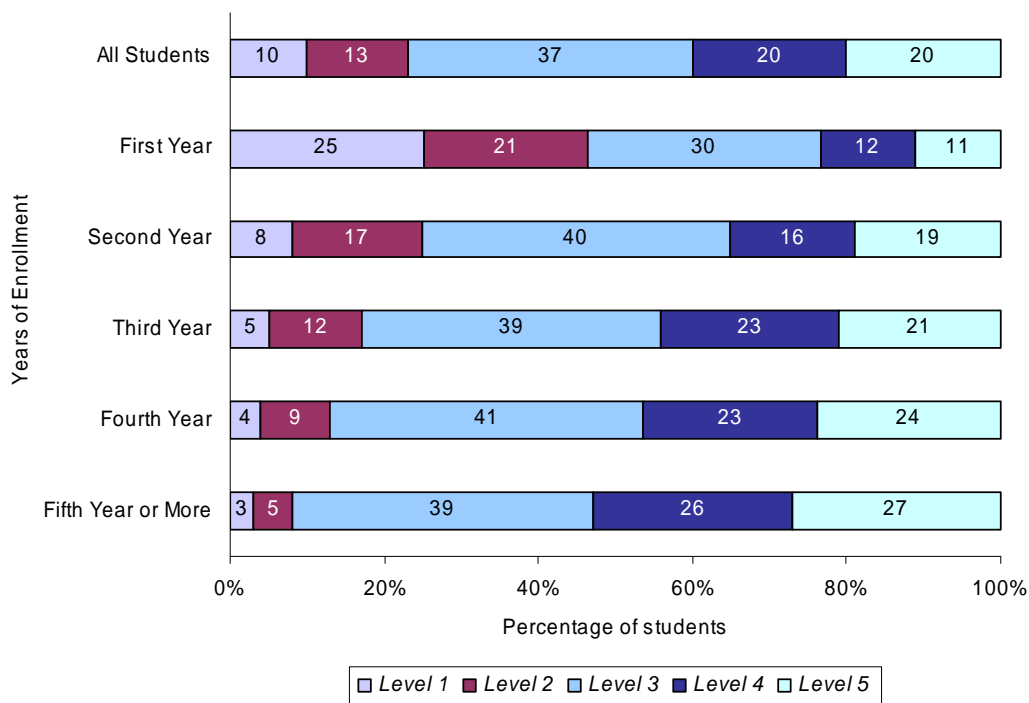
Figure 5: Spring 2009 MEPA Results—Percentage of Students at Each Performance Level by Years of Enrollment in Massachusetts: Grade Span 7–8



Grade Span 9–12

At grade span 9–12, 20 percent of all LEP students performed at *Level 5*. The percentage of LEP students in grades 9–12 performing at *Level 5* increased from 11 percent of students in their first year of enrollment in Massachusetts schools, to 19 percent of students in their second year of enrollment, to 21 percent for those in their third year of enrollment, to 24 percent of students in their fourth year of enrollment, and to 27 percent of students in their fifth year of enrollment. Ten percent of all LEP students in grade span 9–12 performed at *Level 1*, 13 percent performed at *Level 2*, 37 percent performed at *Level 3*, and 20 percent performed at *Level 4*.

Figure 6: Spring 2009 MEPA Results—Percentage of Students at Each Performance Level by Years of Enrollment in Massachusetts: Grade Span 9–12



III. Performance of LEP Students from the State's Seven Highest Incidence First Language Groups

Tables 3–9 display the results of LEP students on the spring 2009 MEPA tests by grade span and years of enrollment disaggregated for the seven highest incidence first languages of the students participating: Spanish, Portuguese, Chinese, Haitian Creole, Khmer, Cape Verdean, and Vietnamese. Appendix C provides the number and percentage of enrolled LEP students for the 20 highest incidence first language groups in the state.

Table 3: Performance of LEP Students in Spring 2009 MEPA by Grade Span and Years of Enrollment in Massachusetts: First Language SPANISH							
Grade Span / Years of Enrollment	Number Tested	Average Scaled Score	Percentage of Students at Each Performance Level				
			Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
Grades K–2							
First Year	3,953	461	32	35	28	4	1
Second Year	3,527	478	4	15	49	25	7
Third Year	2,885	490	1	4	30	39	26
Fourth Year	487	490	1	3	32	43	22
Fifth Year or More	6 ^a	—	—	—	—	—	—
All Students ^b	10,893	476	14	19	35	22	10
Grades 3–4							
First Year	538	443	41	23	19	15	2
Second Year	460	467	6	19	37	29	8
Third Year	531	476	2	11	32	46	9
Fourth Year	2,214	483	1	5	25	54	16
Fifth Year or More	2,235	487	0	3	20	54	23
All Students ^b	5,990	479	5	7	24	47	16
Grades 5–6							
First Year	477	445	42	27	21	8	2
Second Year	425	469	6	22	38	28	6
Third Year	422	475	3	12	45	31	9
Fourth Year	317	483	2	7	31	42	17
Fifth Year or More	2,387	488	1	2	24	51	22
All Students ^b	4,042	479	6	9	28	40	17
Grades 7–8							
First Year	517	449	43	30	18	6	3
Second Year	431	470	11	25	43	14	7
Third Year	400	480	4	18	40	21	18
Fourth Year	372	484	2	12	41	25	20
Fifth Year or More	1,543	488	1	6	37	33	24
All Students ^b	3,276	478	9	14	35	24	17
Grades 9–12							
First Year	810	460	37	26	24	7	6
Second Year	779	474	13	23	40	11	13
Third Year	793	480	7	15	44	20	15
Fourth Year	614	482	5	12	45	22	16
Fifth Year or More	1,637	487	3	6	43	26	22
All Students ^b	4,655	478	12	15	39	18	15

^a Results are not reported if fewer than 10 students were tested.

^b Numbers may not sum to number for All Students because the number of years of enrollment was not available for some students.

**Table 4: Performance of LEP Students in Spring 2009 MEPA
by Grade Span and Years of Enrollment in Massachusetts: First Language
PORTUGUESE**

Grade Span / Years of Enrollment	Number Tested	Average Scaled Score	Percentage of Students at Each Performance Level				
			Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
Grades K–2							
First Year	726	464	24	36	32	7	1
Second Year	582	482	2	10	43	35	10
Third Year	421	494	1	3	21	38	37
Fourth Year	53	493	0	2	23	47	28
Fifth Year or More	0	–	–	–	–	–	–
All Students ^a	1,787	478	11	19	32	25	13
Grades 3–4							
First Year	72	457	25	17	26	26	6
Second Year	72	484	0	8	24	49	19
Third Year	85	486	1	4	21	53	21
Fourth Year	339	487	1	1	18	57	23
Fifth Year or More	242	493	0	1	10	57	31
All Students ^a	811	486	3	3	17	53	24
Grades 5–6							
First Year	54	451	31	31	20	9	7
Second Year	72	483	6	8	29	31	26
Third Year	57	490	0	2	28	37	33
Fourth Year	66	495	0	2	14	42	42
Fifth Year or More	223	497	0	0	10	49	40
All Students ^a	474	488	5	5	17	39	34
Grades 7–8							
First Year	70	458	27	31	26	14	1
Second Year	66	485	3	8	41	29	20
Third Year	56	498	0	4	25	20	52
Fourth Year	73	493	0	4	34	25	37
Fifth Year or More	129	497	1	0	20	33	46
All Students ^a	395	487	6	8	28	26	33
Grades 9–12							
First Year	180	475	17	16	32	21	15
Second Year	168	484	4	9	45	26	16
Third Year	105	494	2	5	30	28	36
Fourth Year	113	494	0	2	35	26	38
Fifth Year or More	139	495	1	1	34	22	41
All Students ^a	714	486	6	7	35	24	27

^a Numbers may not sum to number for All Students because the number of years of enrollment was not available for some students.

**Table 5: Performance of LEP Students in Spring 2009 MEPA
by Grade Span and Years of Enrollment in Massachusetts: First Language
CHINESE**

Grade Span / Years of Enrollment	Number Tested	Average Scaled Score	Percentage of Students at Each Performance Level				
			Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
Grades K–2							
First Year	534	466	26	24	37	10	3
Second Year	419	487	1	6	38	37	18
Third Year	316	500	0	1	10	38	51
Fourth Year	11	495	0	0	18	64	18
Fifth Year or More	0	–	–	–	–	–	–
All Students ^a	1,281	481	11	12	31	26	20
Grades 3–4							
First Year	57	454	28	19	28	23	2
Second Year	58	477	3	10	22	45	19
Third Year	46	494	0	2	9	54	35
Fourth Year	258	494	0	1	10	60	29
Fifth Year or More	164	501	0	0	7	42	51
All Students ^a	585	490	3	4	12	49	32
Grades 5–6							
First Year	47	463	15	34	21	21	9
Second Year	56	482	5	11	25	38	21
Third Year	42	489	2	10	29	21	38
Fourth Year	18	497	0	0	17	39	44
Fifth Year or More	154	501	0	1	6	40	53
All Students ^a	317	490	3	9	15	34	38
Grades 7–8							
First Year	43	471	26	5	35	19	16
Second Year	59	489	2	14	29	15	41
Third Year	34	492	3	9	21	26	41
Fourth Year	22	496	0	5	32	14	50
Fifth Year or More	51	496	2	6	20	25	47
All Students ^a	212	487	8	8	27	20	38
Grades 9–12							
First Year	142	475	17	12	39	17	15
Second Year	142	483	4	17	38	18	23
Third Year	117	489	2	14	28	23	33
Fourth Year	63	491	2	6	33	25	33
Fifth Year or More	71	489	1	4	44	25	25
All Students ^a	542	484	6	12	37	20	25

^a Numbers may not sum to number for All Students because the number of years of enrollment was not available for some students.

**Table 6: Performance of LEP Students in Spring 2009 MEPA
by Grade Span and Years of Enrollment in Massachusetts: First Language
HAITIAN CREOLE**

Grade Span / Years of Enrollment	Number Tested	Average Scaled Score	Percentage of Students at Each Performance Level				
			Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
Grades K–2							
First Year	260	463	33	26	30	10	1
Second Year	228	480	4	14	48	28	7
Third Year	130	491	1	2	32	38	27
Fourth Year	28	490	0	0	32	54	14
Fifth Year or More	0	–	–	–	–	–	–
All Students ^a	649	475	15	16	37	24	9
Grades 3–4							
First Year	57	448	25	35	28	11	2
Second Year	81	465	10	21	27	37	5
Third Year	33	478	0	3	42	52	3
Fourth Year	121	485	0	3	19	57	21
Fifth Year or More	86	487	1	0	22	50	27
All Students ^a	378	475	6	11	25	44	14
Grades 5–6							
First Year	74	450	30	34	24	9	3
Second Year	69	468	7	25	36	26	6
Third Year	37	487	0	5	24	46	24
Fourth Year	28	491	0	0	18	57	25
Fifth Year or More	101	489	0	2	23	51	24
All Students ^a	311	474	9	15	26	35	15
Grades 7–8							
First Year	70	459	24	29	30	13	4
Second Year	79	477	3	24	37	22	15
Third Year	32	493	0	9	28	28	34
Fourth Year	24	498	0	8	17	25	50
Fifth Year or More	81	495	0	1	22	33	43
All Students ^a	287	481	7	16	28	24	25
Grades 9–12							
First Year	184	468	23	21	40	10	7
Second Year	239	483	5	14	39	21	21
Third Year	94	488	0	6	45	26	23
Fourth Year	65	490	2	6	37	22	34
Fifth Year or More	101	488	3	5	38	36	19
All Students ^a	689	481	9	13	39	21	18

^a Numbers may not sum to number for All Students because the number of years of enrollment was not available for some students.

**Table 7: Performance of LEP Students in Spring 2009 MEPA
by Grade Span and Years of Enrollment in Massachusetts: First Language
KHMER**

Grade Span / Years of Enrollment	Number Tested	Average Scaled Score	Percentage of Students at Each Performance Level				
			Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
Grades K–2							
First Year	265	461	29	36	31	3	0
Second Year	278	482	4	10	47	28	12
Third Year	241	495	1	2	17	39	40
Fourth Year	15	490	0	0	33	47	20
Fifth Year or More	0	–	–	–	–	–	–
All Students ^b	800	479	11	16	32	24	17
Grades 3–4							
First Year	8 ^a	–	–	–	–	–	–
Second Year	12	481	0	17	17	50	17
Third Year	19	481	0	5	26	58	11
Fourth Year	232	489	0	3	19	51	27
Fifth Year or More	262	493	0	2	13	48	37
All Students ^b	533	490	1	2	17	50	31
Grades 5–6							
First Year	7 ^a	–	–	–	–	–	–
Second Year	3 ^a	–	–	–	–	–	–
Third Year	12	491	0	0	17	50	33
Fourth Year	10	488	0	0	20	70	10
Fifth Year or More	334	494	0	0	18	48	34
All Students ^b	366	493	0	1	19	48	32
Grades 7–8							
First Year	7 ^a	–	–	–	–	–	–
Second Year	11	488	0	9	55	9	27
Third Year	20	487	0	5	50	20	25
Fourth Year	14	497	0	7	36	14	43
Fifth Year or More	224	496	1	2	18	35	43
All Students ^b	276	494	1	3	24	32	40
Grades 9–12							
First Year	18	472	6	33	39	17	6
Second Year	24	480	8	21	33	25	13
Third Year	38	489	5	5	32	37	21
Fourth Year	20	490	0	5	45	10	40
Fifth Year or More	281	495	6	2	23	24	45
All Students ^b	382	492	6	5	26	24	38

^a Results are not reported if fewer than 10 students were tested.

^b Numbers may not sum to number for All Students because the number of years of enrollment was not available for some students.

**Table 8: Performance of LEP Students in Spring 2009 MEPA
by Grade Span and Years of Enrollment in Massachusetts: First Language
CAPE VERDEAN**

Grade Span / Years of Enrollment	Number Tested	Average Scaled Score	Percentage of Students at Each Performance Level				
			Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
Grades K–2							
First Year	213	453	54	30	13	3	0
Second Year	185	478	3	21	48	23	6
Third Year	137	490	3	2	34	34	26
Fourth Year	21	488	0	0	38	43	19
Fifth Year or More	0	–	–	–	–	–	–
All Students ^a	557	472	22	19	31	19	9
Grades 3–4							
First Year	64	428	63	31	5	2	0
Second Year	47	453	21	30	34	11	4
Third Year	28	475	0	11	32	43	14
Fourth Year	137	486	0	3	23	51	23
Fifth Year or More	108	483	0	4	27	55	15
All Students ^a	385	470	13	12	23	38	14
Grades 5–6							
First Year	65	434	48	34	18	0	0
Second Year	53	465	9	21	43	25	2
Third Year	36	481	0	8	42	36	14
Fourth Year	33	490	0	0	27	48	24
Fifth Year or More	113	488	1	1	25	50	23
All Students ^a	301	472	12	13	29	33	13
Grades 7–8							
First Year	79	445	48	38	11	3	0
Second Year	70	468	7	36	41	10	6
Third Year	36	477	6	14	56	19	6
Fourth Year	35	480	9	3	49	31	9
Fifth Year or More	91	489	0	8	35	29	29
All Students ^a	314	470	16	22	34	17	11
Grades 9–12							
First Year	220	459	39	30	23	2	7
Second Year	202	479	8	16	46	15	15
Third Year	127	482	6	13	36	26	19
Fourth Year	85	490	1	5	36	33	25
Fifth Year or More	79	490	1	3	46	27	24
All Students ^a	719	475	16	17	35	16	15

^a Numbers may not sum to number for All Students because the number of years of enrollment was not available for some students.

**Table 9: Performance of LEP Students in Spring 2009 MEPA
by Grade Span and Years of Enrollment in Massachusetts: First Language
VIETNAMESE**

Grade Span / Years of Enrollment	Number Tested	Average Scaled Score	Percentage of Students at Each Performance Level				
			Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
Grades K–2							
First Year	345	463	26	34	35	4	0
Second Year	349	484	2	9	43	32	14
Third Year	291	497	1	2	16	39	42
Fourth Year	30	489	0	0	43	33	23
Fifth Year or More	1 ^a	–	–	–	–	–	–
All Students ^b	1,018	481	1	15	33	25	18
Grades 3–4							
First Year	23	457	22	22	30	17	9
Second Year	20	477	0	15	35	30	20
Third Year	28	495	0	0	14	54	32
Fourth Year	236	490	0	1	15	55	29
Fifth Year or More	171	494	0	1	14	49	37
All Students ^b	479	490	1	3	16	50	30
Grades 5–6							
First Year	23	447	39	22	35	0	4
Second Year	10	481	0	0	50	30	20
Third Year	15	487	7	13	7	47	27
Fourth Year	16	501	0	0	19	31	50
Fifth Year or More	144	492	1	2	14	52	31
All Students ^b	209	487	5	5	18	44	29
Grades 7–8							
First Year	26	459	15	58	15	8	4
Second Year	15	485	0	7	53	20	20
Third Year	8 ^a	–	–	–	–	–	–
Fourth Year	11	502	0	9	0	27	64
Fifth Year or More	75	497	0	3	27	27	44
All Students ^b	135	488	3	15	26	21	35
Grades 9–12							
First Year	75	473	13	24	44	11	8
Second Year	44	489	2	7	43	16	32
Third Year	35	492	0	9	31	26	34
Fourth Year	30	489	0	10	43	20	27
Fifth Year or More	56	492	4	2	34	27	34
All Students ^b	242	485	5	12	39	19	25

^a Results are not reported if fewer than 10 students were tested.

^b Numbers may not sum to number for All Students because the number of years of enrollment was not available for some students.

Appendices

Appendix A. MEPA Scaled Score Ranges for Each Performance Level

Five performance levels are used to report 2009 MEPA results: *Level 1*, *Level 2*, *Level 3*, *Level 4*, and *Level 5*. The overall MEPA scaled score range is 400 to 550. The scaled score ranges for each performance level are shown below for each grade span.

Spring 2009 MEPA Scaled-Score Ranges						
Grade Span	Scaled Score Range	Performance Level Ranges				
		<i>Level 1</i>	<i>Level 2</i>	<i>Level 3</i>	<i>Level 4</i>	<i>Level 5</i>
K–2	400–550	400–452	453–465	466–484	485–499	500–550
3–4	400–550	400–431	432–451	452–473	474–499	500–550
5–6	400–550	400–435	436–455	456–478	479–499	500–550
7–8	400–550	400–442	443–463	464–485	486–499	500–550
9–12	400–550	400–449	450–463	464–488	489–499	500–550

Appendix B. New MEPA Performance Level Descriptors

Grades K-2

Level 1 A student at this performance level has not yet developed simple written and spoken communication in English. Errors (lexical, phonological, syntactic, semantic)¹ consistently interfere with communication, and comprehension is mostly demonstrated either non-verbally, through a few basic words, or in a language other than English.

A student performing at this level:

- recognizes only a few letters of the alphabet and reads a few simple, high-frequency words, with visual and graphic support (R)²
- writes only a few letters of the alphabet and may attempt a few basic words, but these are seldom recognizable (W)²
- speaks using a few basic words with frequent errors; little or no command of isolated vocabulary; responds inappropriately to most questions; is seldom intelligible (S)²
- recognizes and comprehends only a few basic spoken words with consistent need for repetition and clarification; may demonstrate minimal comprehension of simple speech either non-verbally, through a few basic words, or in a language other than English (L)²

Level 2 A student at this performance level has developed simple written and spoken communication in English. Errors often interfere with basic comprehension and communication, although the meaning is sometimes retained. Limited lexical, syntactic, phonological, and discourse features of English are present.

A student performing at this level:

- recognizes many letters of the alphabet; reads and comprehends some simple written words and phrases, often with visual or graphic support; recognizes some basic features of written English appropriate for the specified grade (R)
- writes some letters of the alphabet, a few basic words, and may attempt phrases or simple sentences, but with little or no control of standard English writing conventions (W)
- speaks using single words and a few basic phrases; gives short responses to simple questions, often using graphic, visual, or gestural support; performs very basic language functions; word choice is often inappropriate or incorrect; is sometimes intelligible but generally difficult to understand (S)
- recognizes some sounds of the English language; comprehends some basic spoken vocabulary, phrases, and simple questions, with frequent need for repetition and clarification (L)

¹ Lexical: pertaining to the words or vocabulary of a language

Phonological: pertaining to the pattern and distribution of speech sounds in a language and the rules governing pronunciation

Syntactic: pertaining to the rules for the formation of phrases and sentences from words in a language

Semantic: pertaining to the meaning of words and symbols in a language

² R = Reading, W = Writing, S = Speaking, L = Listening

<i>Level 3</i>	<p>A student at this performance level communicates in English and uses the language in the school context. Errors may still impede communication and comprehension; however, the overall meaning is usually retained. A limited range of lexical, syntactic, phonological, and discourse features are used, and oral and written communication, although somewhat inconsistent, is usually accurate and understandable.</p> <p>A student performing at this level:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • recognizes most letters of the alphabet, and reads and comprehends many common written words including some high-frequency academic language appropriate for the grade level; comprehends the main idea of some grade-level texts, mostly on familiar topics; is aware of some grade-level appropriate features of written English (R) • writes words, spelling some familiar words correctly, and may attempt short sentences with a limited range of linguistic complexity relative to what is required for the specified grade level; demonstrates limited control of grade-level appropriate standard English writing conventions (W) • speaks using common words and phrases, and basic grammar and sentence structure, including some high-frequency academic language of the content area appropriate for a student in that grade; attempts sentences with some complex grade-appropriate language structures, with occasional errors and frequent pauses in conversation; is often intelligible (S) • recognizes most sounds of the English language and comprehends most sentences and questions during interpersonal communication, with occasional need for clarification and repetition; comprehends some grade-level appropriate academic vocabulary, discourse, and texts read aloud (L)
<i>Level 4</i>	<p>A student at this performance level is moderately fluent in English and uses the language in the school context with few or minor errors. The student usually demonstrates control of many lexical, syntactic, phonological, and discourse features, with continued support and assistance as needed; and oral and written communication is mostly accurate and usually understandable.</p> <p>A student performing at this level:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • recognizes a range of common written words and high-frequency academic language appropriate for the grade level; comprehends most grade-level appropriate texts with language of varying linguistic complexity, on familiar and closely related new topics across most content areas; is aware of many grade-level appropriate features of written English (R) • writes short sentences and paragraphs, using words and phrases correctly to provide detail; demonstrates modest (adequate) control of standard English writing conventions appropriate for a student in the grade level (W) • speaks with occasional errors using mostly grade-level appropriate words, phrases, sentences, and expressions, and is mostly intelligible; demonstrates general control of standard spoken English conventions, such as vocabulary and grammar (S) • recognizes nearly all sounds of the English language and comprehends most oral communications, including most grade-level appropriate academic discourse, with infrequent need for clarification and repetition; recognizes and comprehends most grade-level appropriate vocabulary, including high-frequency academic language of the content area (L)

Level 5 A student at this performance level communicates effectively in English in the school context with few errors. The student demonstrates control of most lexical, syntactic, phonological, and discourse features, and oral and written communication is accurate and understandable.

A student performing at this level:

- comprehends most grade-level appropriate texts with language of varying linguistic complexity on familiar and new topics across all content areas; draws conclusions and makes interpretations from text; demonstrates a beginning awareness of implied ideas; is aware of most grade-level appropriate features of written English (R)
- writes and edits texts as required of a student in the specified grade; demonstrates control of most grade-level appropriate standard English writing conventions; uses descriptive words and phrases to provide detail and fit the audience and purpose (W)
- speaks with grade-level appropriate fluency, including academic language of the content area; generates innovative language in social and academic settings, varying speech to fit audience and intent; can sustain interpersonal interaction; demonstrates control of most standard spoken English conventions; is almost always intelligible (S)
- comprehends most extended and prolonged oral communication, including grade-level appropriate academic discourse, with little need for clarification or repetition; recognizes and comprehends most grade-level appropriate vocabulary, including high-frequency academic language of the content area (L)

New MEPA Performance Level Descriptors

Grades 3-12

Level 1 A student at this performance level has not yet developed simple written and spoken communication in English. Errors (lexical, phonological, syntactic, semantic) consistently interfere with communication, and comprehension is mostly demonstrated either non-verbally, through a few basic words, or in a language other than English.

A student performing at this level:

- recognizes only a few basic features of written English and reads a few simple written words with graphic or visual support (R)
- writes only a few simple words, and may attempt a few phrases or short sentences, but these are seldom recognizable (W)
- speaks using a few basic words with little or no command of isolated vocabulary; responds inappropriately to most questions; is seldom intelligible (S)
- recognizes and comprehends only a few basic spoken words and sounds of the English language, with consistent need for repetition and clarification; may demonstrate minimal comprehension of simple speech either non-verbally, through a few basic words, or in a language other than English (L)

Level 2 A student at this performance level has developed simple written and spoken communication in English. Errors often interfere with basic comprehension and communication, although the meaning is sometimes retained. Limited lexical, syntactic, phonological, and discourse features of English are emerging.

A student performing at this level:

- reads and understands simple written words, phrases, and some simple sentences; demonstrates an awareness of some features of written English; comprehends some simple below grade-level texts (R)
 - writes one or more simple sentences with some awareness of purpose and audience; demonstrates little control of grade-appropriate standard English writing conventions (W)
 - speaks using single words and a few basic phrases; gives short responses to simple questions, often using graphic, gestural, or visual support; uses basic vocabulary in the context of social interaction, with little use of grade-level appropriate academic language; word choice is often inappropriate or incorrect for the situation or context; is sometimes intelligible, but comprehensibility remains difficult (S)
 - recognizes some sounds of the English language and comprehends basic spoken vocabulary, phrases, and some simple questions with frequent need for repetition and clarification (L)
-

Level 3 A student at this performance level communicates in English and uses the language in the school context. Errors may still impede communication and comprehension; however, the overall meaning is usually retained. A limited range of lexical, syntactic, phonological, and discourse features of English are used, and oral and written communications, although somewhat inconsistent, are usually accurate and understandable.

A student performing at this level:

- reads and comprehends words and texts of limited linguistic complexity and on familiar topics; recognizes common written words and some high-frequency academic language of the content area; is aware of many features of written English (R)
- writes sentences and short, simple paragraphs with limited detail and linguistic complexity relative to what is required for a student in the specified grade; edits and revises to fit an audience; demonstrates limited control of grade-level appropriate standard English writing conventions (W)
- speaks using common words, phrases, and basic grammar and sentence structure, including some high-frequency academic language of the content area; attempts sentences with some complex language structures, with errors and frequent pauses in conversation; is often intelligible (S)
- recognizes most sounds of the English language and comprehends most sentences and questions during interpersonal communication, with occasional need for clarification and repetition; comprehends some grade-level appropriate academic vocabulary, discourse, and texts read aloud (L)

Level 4 A student at this performance level is nearly fluent in English and uses the language in the school context with few or minor errors. The student usually demonstrates control of many lexical, syntactic, phonological, and discourse features, with continued support and assistance as needed; and oral and written communication is mostly accurate and usually understandable.

A student performing at this level:

- reads and comprehends most grade-level appropriate texts, including main ideas and details, primarily on familiar topics across most content areas, with some assistance; recognizes and comprehends most common grade-level appropriate vocabulary and academic words; is aware of many features of written English (R)
- writes and edits a variety of sentences and paragraphs using original words and phrases to provide detail to suit the audience and purpose; uses a limited range of high-frequency academic language of the content area; demonstrates moderate control of grade-level appropriate standard writing conventions, with some assistance required (W)
- speaks using mostly grade-level appropriate words, phrases, sentences, and expressions, and demonstrates general control of standard spoken English conventions, such as vocabulary and grammar, with occasional errors; is mostly intelligible (S)
- recognizes nearly all sounds of the English language and comprehends most oral communications, including most grade-level appropriate academic discourse with infrequent need for clarification and repetition; recognizes and comprehends most grade-level appropriate vocabulary, including high-frequency academic language of the content area (L)

Level 5 A student at this performance level communicates effectively in English in the school context with few errors. The student demonstrates control of lexical, syntactic, phonological, and discourse features, and oral and written communication is primarily accurate and understandable.

A student performing at this level:

- comprehends most grade-level appropriate texts on familiar and new topics, with language of varied linguistic complexity across all content areas; draws conclusions and makes interpretations from text; demonstrates an understanding of abstract or implied ideas; is aware of most features of written English (R)
- writes and edits expanded texts (multi-paragraph compositions) of varying lengths, level of detail, and linguistic complexity relative to other students in the specified grade; accurately uses a range of academic language of the content area; demonstrates control of most standard English writing conventions, with only occasional assistance (W)
- speaks with grade-level appropriate fluency, including academic language of the content area; generates innovative language in social and academic settings, varying speech to fit audience and intent; can sustain interpersonal interactions; demonstrates control of most standard spoken English conventions; is almost always intelligible (S)
- comprehends spoken language within the context of nearly all extended and prolonged oral communication, including grade-level appropriate academic discourse, with little need for clarification or repetition; recognizes and comprehends most grade-level appropriate vocabulary, including high-frequency academic language of the content area (L)

Appendix C. Number and Percentage of Enrolled LEP Students by First Language

First Language ¹		Number	Percent
1.	Spanish	30,693	52.6%
2.	Portuguese	4,380	7.5%
3.	Chinese	3,078	5.3%
4.	Haitian Creole	2,497	4.3%
5.	Khmer	2,431	4.2%
6.	Cape Verdean	2,401	4.1%
7.	Vietnamese	2,167	3.7%
8.	Arabic	1,025	1.8%
9.	Russian	894	1.5%
10.	Korean	570	1.0%
11.	Somali	543	0.9%
12.	Albanian	454	0.8%
13.	French	421	0.7%
14.	Japanese	330	0.6%
15.	Gujarati	308	0.5%
16.	Urdu	237	0.4%
17.	Hindi	227	0.4%
18.	Patois	224	0.4%
19.	Niger-Congo	216	0.4%
20.	Swahili	216	0.4%

¹ Data are provided for the 20 highest incidence first language groups based on June 2009 SIMS data.